

JIM WEBB

VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4024

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4605

January 17, 2008

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-6050

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you and the Committee staff plan this year's hearings on U.S. military and diplomatic operations in Iraq, I wish to request that we expand the number of witnesses beyond General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker, should they be invited to testify this spring.

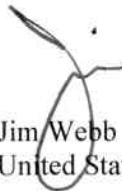
Since September 2007, conditions in Afghanistan and Pakistan have deteriorated considerably. We also have not engaged with Iran in any meaningful way diplomatically. The incident involving U.S. Navy warships and Iranian patrol boats early this month reminds us that the potential for miscalculation is real.

General Petraeus indicated last September that he would give a further report on the pace of troop reductions and mission adjustments in mid-March of this year. If these hearings occur, I would hope that the Committee will also request that Admiral William Fallon testify. As the commander of the U.S. Central Command and General Petraeus' senior officer in the chain of command, Admiral Fallon's range of responsibilities is far wider. Furthermore, his assessment of the regional forces now in play would vastly increase the understanding of our national challenge.

Beyond administration witnesses, it also would be valuable to hear from independent political-military specialists. Dr. Andrew Bacevich, for example, is a professor of International Relations and History at Boston University. A retired Army colonel, combat veteran, and author, Dr. Bacevich is widely recognized for his insightful views on the war. I am familiar with his writings, and believe his testimony would provide a sound frame of reference for administration policies and events in motion in the Middle East and South Asia.

I am available to discuss this matter if you so desire. I have sent a similar letter to Chairman Levin on the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

Sincerely,



Jim Webb
United States Senator

JHW/jps

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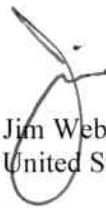
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